CROYDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY
NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22.05.2018:

President Graham Harker opened the meeting at 19.45 hours and welcomed the 12 members present. He introduced the speaker **Lindy Bosworth** and invited her to give her presentation on **Czechoslovakia**. Lindy said her display was **A Czech Miscellany -** it was a fine, well presented display both verbally and visually.

Members were entertained by a fluent speaker who knew her subject thoroughly and kept the attention of her audience throughout. The quality and the quantity of rare material was exceptional. Rare original artwork was on display along with autographs of Alfons Mucha (mentioned below) and Karl Selzinger, a designer of the third issue of airmail stamps.

Lindy started with a brief history of Czechoslovakia from earliest times (8th century) to 1918 with 6 Dutch advertising cards produced by the Liebig Meat Extract Co. (eventually Fray Bentos). Various pre-1918 items were shown including the use of overprinted Austro-Hungarian stamps.

In 1918, when Czechoslovakia gained its independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, there was payment in cash for postage and mixed franking of the first stamps of Czechoslovakia - the Hradčany series which were designed by the successful Art Nouveau artist Alfons Mucha, who also designed the first Czech banknotes. There were five types of the Hradčany design issued, three of which show a 'rising sun' later erased as this was where the sun set over the castle buildings. Production faults, various perforation types

and various papers were shown. Hradčany stamps were overprinted for the Red Cross Charity issue, the first Airmail issue and S.O. (East Silesia) Plebiscite. Postage Due (Doplatit) PS cards and Letter cards were also shown. In 1948 for the 30th anniversary of the Republic, a commemorative sheet with the Hradčany design was issued.

Airmails – 1st and 2nd issues were overprinted stamps and these were displayed with usage together with the 1948 30th Anniversary Miniature Sheet. The first dedicated airmail issue of 8 stamps was introduced on 16.12.1930 and a supplementary stamp issued on 24.4.1939. Varieties, perforations followed by usage on cover of 3rd Airmail issue. These included Zeppelin flown mail and destinations including Argentina, New Zealand, India, Kenya and South Africa.

This was followed by spectacular single, two and three colour cancels. Jan Jaroslav Poslusny, a Prague accountant, patented 'an automatic postmarking device' in the early 1930s. A wonderful selection followed of commercial advertising to show usage of various stamps issued from 1918 onwards. Since 1994 there has been an annual vote for 'The Most Beautiful Stamp of the Czech Republic' and examples were shown for 1994 to 2016. The display ended with a frame of "Why I collect Czechoslovakia" – postcards of Karlovy Vary/Karlsbad/Carlsbad which was where Lindy's father was born and lived before coming to the UK in the 1930s.

Members enjoyed viewing the collection and chatting to Lindy. President Graham Harker gave the vote of thanks and the meeting closed at 21.00 hours.

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Graham Harker
Honorary Assistant Secretary